

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KUALA 01469 200522Z

51

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EB-03 L-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 MC-01 PM-03 SP-02 PRS-01 /042 W

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R 200440Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9309

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 1469

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR MY RP

SUBJ: SABAH AND SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

1. A NON-RESIDENT AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN WHO HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN MALAYSIA AND ASIA FOR 23 YEARS TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 15 THAT IN EARLY 1974 SABAH CHIEF MINISTER TUN MUSTAPHA SENT ABORTIVE "PEACE MISSION" TO MANILA. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE, MUSTAPHA SENT HARUN (WALTER) LENG, AN EXPATRIATE BRITISH ENGINEER AND MUSLIM CONVERT WHO HAS BEEN A LONG-TIME CRONY OF MUSTAPHA AND SABAH CHIEF OF STATE MOHAMED FUAD (DONALD STEPHENS), TO MANILA IN LATE JANUARY OR EARLY FEBRUARY 1974 WITH A "PEACE OFFER" THAT WOULD QUELL THE FILIPINO MUSLIM REBELLION AND PRESUMABLY END SABAH ASSISTANCE TO DISSIDENTS. SOURCE DID NOT KNOW PRECISE CONTENTS OF MUSTAPHA'S PROPOSAL BUT COMMENTED THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO SEND A PERSONAL EMISSARY. SOURCE ALSO SAID THAT LENG MET WITH "PEOPLE IN PRESIDENT'S OFFICE", NOT WITH MARCOS PERSONALLY, BUT PROBABLY WITH MELCHOR AND PERHAPS OTHERS.

2. AFTER LENG RETURNED TO SABAH IN LATE FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH, SOURCE CONTINUED, MUSTAPHA CHOSE FOR REASONS NOT ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KUALA 01469 200522Z

CLEAR TO DENOUNCE LENG AND REPUDIATED HIS "PEACE OFFER"

TO THE PHILIPPINE GOVT. LENG WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DEPRIVED OF HIS POST AS CHIEF ENGINEER FOR SABAH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP. AND WAS FORCED TO LEAVE SABAH (SEE K.L. A-76, 6/3/74). LENG IS NOW IN KUANTAN, PAHANG AND HEADS SMALL CONSTRUCTION FIRM.

3. SOURCE ALSO SAID HE BELIEVES THAT ROBIN LUCKER, AN EX-BRITISH CIVIL SERVANT IN SABAH AND PRIVATE BUSINESSMAN NOW IN SINGAPORE, HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ARMS TRADE WITH SABAH WITH ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO FILIPINO MUSLIMS. SOURCE NOTED THAT HE HAS NOT SEEN LUCKER FOR NEARLY A YEAR AND HEARD THAT IN MID-1974 LUCKER WAS HOSPITALIZED IN SINGAPORE WITH HEART CONDITION. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT BOTH LENG AND LUCKER WERE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN SABAH TIMBER DEALS AND ARE NOW RELATIVELY WEALTHY MEN.

4. COMMENT: FOREGOING IS REPORTED FOR BACKGROUND. TUN MUSTAPHA'S ACTIONS OFTEN SEEM ERRATIC BUT WE KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT THE INNER WORKINGS OF HIS COURT THAT WE HESITATE TO OFFER AN EXPLANATION FOR THEM IN THIS CASE. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD RECENTLY FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT MUSTAPHA, THROUGH SABAH FOUNDATION DIRECTOR SYED KECHIK, IS DEALING WITH FILIPINO INTERESTS, BELIEVED TO BE LOPEZ FAMILY, ON A LEGITIMATE JOINT VENTURE INVOLVING TIMBER EXPLOITATION IN SABAH AND CONSTRUCTION OF PLYWOOD AND PERHAPS PAPER MILLS.  
UNDERHILL

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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